

TOOTING SLIDE ON LOAKES PK. SLOPES

WYCOMBE WANDERERS 4, TOOTING AND MITCHAM 0
(Isthmian League)

TOOTING'S slip is well and truly showing now. In hard facts this defeat at Wycombe brought their total to one win in 12 matches since November 12. And it was only the fourth time this season that they have failed to find the net.

Even though the home side had to introduce two 17-year-olds, Peter Eyres and Vivian Busby, in place of injured stalwarts Paul Bates and

By FRED
PHILPOT

John Beck, Tooting failed miserably to stamp any sort of authority on the exchanges.

Still nobody is inclined to hold the ball and they seem utterly unable to fight back once they drop into arrears.

Chambers and Nelson seemed to find it all a little too much in the first half. But they showed up a little more after the interval when United re-shuffled their line-up.

Tooting were soon rocking and rolling on the switchback Loakes Park pitch. Leading the home onslaught was ever-active Tony Horseman and with ex-international Len Worley causing havoc in support, Wycombe were on their way to the double over United. Wanderers won 5-2 at Sandy Lane in October.

Yet Johnson should have fired the visitors in front in the early stages. But put through on his own, his shot lacked power and goalkeeper Maskell dived to save.

CLOSE CALL

Tooting's only other first half efforts of any note came from Bernard who tossed up three long range efforts into the grateful arms of Maskell and a Johnson cross-shot that skimmed a post on the stroke of half-time.

Nevertheless Wycombe were also having difficulty in piercing Tooting's defence and although forcing corners galore, they notched only one first-half goal when Horseman slipped several tackles before beating Guy decisively.

Positional changes gave United a more lively look on the resumption—and but for two strokes of misfortune they might have got back into the game.

But luck was with the home side and it struck twice.

Eight minutes after the break a tentative shot by Merrick seemed to be well covered by Guy. But it slipped under his body as he dived and rolled into the net.

A harsh penalty decision in the 71st minute finally sunk Tooting when Robertson fell over and Worley crashed over him. Horseman netted from the spot.

With Eddie Green on the wing and skipper Holder initiating attacks in a mid-field role, Tooting had looked more dangerous until this set-back.

But these reverses took their toll and United finished a well-beaten squad as Horseman volleyed in Wycombe's fourth goal (his 43rd this season) six minutes from the end.

Tooting: Guy; Holder, Fillery; F. Ruel, Robertson, Nelson; Chambers, McGill, Johnson, Green, Bernard.

Tooting lose—so Wycombe go top

Wycombe Wanderers 4, Tooting 0 by PETER BROMILLY

NOTHING goes right for Tooting these days. Still searching for their first win in 1967, they slid to another defeat on the notorious slopes of Loakes Park on Saturday when two points took Wycombe to the top of the Isthmian League table.

From the start Tooting lacked purpose, while Wycombe adopted an attacking policy that gained in accuracy as the match progressed.

Despite making five changes, Tooting were still a mediocre side.

McGill continues to show promise, but Terry Nelson and Sammy Chambers found the pace a bit too much. However, both appeared more at ease in the second half when Nelson moved to full-back and Chambers switched to inside-forward.

On the credit side, there was little wrong with the visitors' defence, although Wycombe threw away several openings before they settled down. Richard Guy could be blamed for one goal but he atoned with some astonishing saves later in the game.

He was soon in action and saved from Len Worley, Tony Horseman and Keith Samuels as the home side took control.

Colin Johnson should have given Tooting an early lead, but he shot weakly and goalkeeper Maskell saved easily.

It was no surprise when Horseman burst clear on his own after 35 minutes to put Wycombe ahead.

Tooting re-shuffled their side in the second half and even though they caused the home defence more anxiety with Eddie Green on the wing and skipper Ken Holder in mid-field, they met with no more success.

Only eight minutes after the interval, outside-left Merrick sent in a hopeful shot which seemed to slip through Guy's outstretched arms before nestling in the net for Wycombe's second goal.

Tooting were still playing better than in the first half. But a near-goal by Holder was pushed over and a rather harsh penalty decision against Dave Fillery finally nailed any hopes of a revival.

Tony Horseman converted the spot kick impeccably, and seven minutes later he combined with Worley to make it 4-0 with the best goal of the match.

Tooting: Guy; Holder, Fillery; Ruel (F.), Robertson, Nelson; Chambers, McGill, Johnson, Green, Bernard.